



SUCCESS STORY

PHILADELPHIA DISTRICT OFFICE

U. S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

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Some Dreams Do Come True – Melinda Emerson’s Did

Melinda Emerson longed to start her own full service production company from the time she was a sophomore at Virginia Polytechnic & State University. So in 1998 after working for a short time in broadcasting she made her dream come true. Melinda founded “Quintessence Entertainment, Inc.,” which means “perfection.” Melinda knew from the start, in business, a person always has to strive for perfection.

Melinda didn’t have a much difficulty moving into the transition of being an entrepreneur with the valuable experience she had acquired in broadcasting and several college internships. She had worked as a production assistant for American Urban Radio Networks (AURN) in Pittsburgh, Pa, and soon became a producer of a talk show at one of AURN’s flagship stations. In 1995 Melinda decided to make a career move to television and became an associate producer for Pittsburgh’s NBC affiliate, WPXI-11 News. Because of her exceptional and creative work it earned her a journalism award for “Outstanding News Segment” from the Pittsburgh Black Media Federation for a series she produced about the quality of life for Blacks in Pittsburgh.

Melinda continued to grow and move. After a year in Pittsburgh, she landed a job in Philadelphia at the nation’s fourth leading television market, joining the news staff of NBC 10, WCAU-TV. Melinda was the youngest producer in a top-five market in the country. In 1998 she was hired by Philadelphia’s number one station ABC Affiliate WPVI-TV, as producer for Action News.

Melinda’s valuable experience in broadcasting magnified her confidence to start Quintessence in 1998. The company specializes in multi-media marketing and presentation materials. The goal of the company is to provide their clients with a cost-effective marketing product that conveys their message accurately and in a compelling fashion. The company’s services range from image-enhancement and industrial training videos to marketing presentations and commercials. They produce everything from commercials to web-design to historical exhibits. Quintessence produced “Philadelphians Forge Diversity in Politics Exhibit” at PoliticalFest for the GOP Convention. The exhibit highlighted political pioneers who built and continued to build the foundation of true democracy the country’s founding fathers envisioned.

Melinda’s success comes partially from a \$25,000 Micro-loan she received in 1999 through Ben Franklin Technology Partner’s Competitive Edge Loan Program that received funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to make capital available to women and minority-owned businesses, low-moderate income individuals, businesses in economically distressed areas and credit challenged individuals. Melinda said “The Competitive Edge Loan Program has made a huge difference in my business. Not only was my loan approved in 30 days, the staff personally kept in touch to make sure my business was developing in a dynamic way.” Ben Franklin believed the Competitive Edge Loan Program was perfect for small business because it wasn’t about just writing a check but also providing technical assistance, something most small businesses can’t afford during the start-up phase. Melinda

employs two-part-time employees and hires several freelance artists in the area to complete most of the company's projects. Some of her clients include the Pennsylvania Ballet, the National Urban League and the Urban League of Philadelphia.

Melinda Emerson was selected as one of the *Top 100 Producers of 2000* by AV Video Multimedia Producer (AVVMMP) magazine. She was profiled in their magazine and was featured on their website. As an award recipient, she along with the other 99 producers was honored at a gala reception in San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art in 2000. February 2003, Quintessence was profiled on WB17 News for Black History Month, in the special news segment the "*Business Report*" and was also featured in February on the cover of "*Minorities and Women in Business Magazine*," special segment "*Women Making a Difference*." April 2003 Quintessence Entertainment, Inc, was the winner of the "*Catalyst Awards*," in the animation, travel tourism, reels and direct marketing categories and the company in May was featured as a finalist for the 2003 "*Black Enterprise Small Business Awards*," nominated in the "*Rising Star of the Year*" category.

Melinda lives by the motto...."for whom much is given, much is required" and credits her remarkable success to her parents. Her belief is, she was fortunate to have mentors who helped shape her purpose, and provided opportunities to polish her skills to the most extraordinary expertise. She is also thankful to the SBA and Ben Franklin Technology Partners for the financial assistance and support she received. Quintessence Entertainment is an SBA certified Small and Disadvantaged Business (SDB), 8(a), Hubzone firm.